(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether it is a fact that the Indian Airlines did not consider the offer from foreign airlines and their subsidiaries while taking a decision on joint venture in this regard and if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) No, Sir. However, Indian Airlines and Singapore Airlines Terminal Services (SATS), a subsidiary of Singapore Airlines, have decided to carry out a feasibility study to consider the possibility of setting up a joint venture company for ground handling services at Indian airports.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No proposals were received for joint ventures from any other foreign airline or its subsidiary.

Concession to students of NE region

12. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether as per the existing practice, students from the North-Eastern region get 50 per cent discount on travel between their home-States and Kolkata;

(b) whether it is a fact that students from this region have requested that discount on air journeys should be given to them between the airport nearest to the student's home and the airport nearest to their place of study; and

(c) if so, whether Government would consider this request favourably and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) to (c) With effect from 7th July, 2003 Indian Airlines is offering 50% discount on Economy class and Point to Point fares to bonafide students between 12 and 26 years of age on the air travel between the hometown and the place of study. However, with effect from 1st October, 2003, this concession has been extended on the flights operating from points in the North-East to Kolkata and *vice versa* also when the sectors form a part of the journey permitted *i.e.* from the place of study to hometown.